PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE

FIFTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,

BY

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ON THE PRÆTECHNICAL STAGES OF MEDICAL EDUCATION.

Preliminary Education and Education in General Science.—The Five Years' Curriculum and Poor Students.—The Assignment of the Extra Year.—The Age at which a Diploma should be obtainable.—The Length of Time to be given to the Study of Preliminary Science.—To Curtail the Number of Subjects not necessarily to lower the Standard of Education.—The Sixth Standard in Board Schools, Specific Subjects, and the Medical Preliminary Examination.—Latin, its Uses and Educational Value.—Mr. Gladstone's Opinion.—An Inquiry by the General Medical Council desirable.

I PROPOSE to address to you this evening some remarks on the subject of medical education, or, to speak more precisely, on the education of medical men, whereby we are enabled to include their education before as well as during their studentship. The importance of this topic is undoubted. It has always interested the profession, and attention to it is now obligatory since we have a share in the election of that body to which its supervision is entrusted. Our share is, it is true, as yet far too small, and will without doubt be increased when the constitution of the General Medical Council shall be again before Parliament. At the present moment there is unusual vitality in this question, for during the last session of the Council very momentous decisions have been arrived at. It is, therefore, peculiarly opportune that we should decide for ourselves both whether the alterations are satisfactory as far as they go, and also whether they go sufficiently far. The alterations are divisible into two classes. The first concerns preliminary education, and, as the Council has supreme authority over this matter, these alterations are obligatory; the second concerns medical education proper, over which the Council has no direct authority. These, therefore, are recommendations only, which may or may not be accepted by examining bodies. At the same time, backed as they are by the weight of the unanimous voice of the Council, any corporation which did not substantially adopt them would certainly suffer a serious loss of prestige. It would be extremely irksome, if not impossible, to enter to-night into a minute criticism of all the details of medical education. My purpose is, therefore, to assign certain limits within which to confine myself. The particular subjects thus selected are the preliminary education and the general science education, and these only as regards those students who take or desire to take an ordinary diploma—for example, those who content themselves with passing the examination of the Conjoint Board of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons. We have no need to trouble ourselves about the education of the fortunate few—those who have the disposition and at the same time the leisure—in other words, the money—to protract their studies; those who can pursue them at the home universities; those who can avail themselves of the opportunities offered by foreign seats of learning and schools of medicine and science. It is self-evident that if two men, equal as regards abilities and industry, study, the one for five years and the other for seven, the net result must be in favour of the latter. It is, as we have seen, a question of money. The problem, then, is how to secure for the poor man the greatest possible amount of that knowledge which now falls to the share of the rich. It cannot all be got. There is, then, a further problem, namely, what section or part of that knowledge is the more important? For that is the part which, failing the whole, we ought to aim at securing.

Let us now consider the time at the disposal of a medical student. I cannot find that the Council expressly states that no youth shall become a medical student at or not before a particular age. But I infer that it does not intend him to pass the preliminary examination before he is 17 years old, and for this reason it has recently suggested that the professional curriculum should be extended from four years to five years, and that therefore the earliest age at which a diploma should be granted must be raised from 21 years to 22 years. I take it, therefore, that the Council proposes to allot:

17 years to preliminary education.
1 year to general science.
3 years to special medical science.
1 year to practical or clinical work

17 + 5 = qualifying age, 22.

Suppose we now, for the sake of argument, look at the question from another point of view, and say that 21 shall still be the age of qualification, and then work backwards, making at the same time a different allotment, namely:

1 year practical or clinical work.
3 years special medical science.
2 years general science.

6 years.

If we deduct 6 from 21, we find that by this arrangement general education would cease, and scientific education would begin at the age of 15 years. We see here the germs of three important questions:

1. Should a diploma be obtainable at the age of 21?
2. Should 2 years be employed in the study of general science?
3. Should compulsory general education be terminable at the age of 15?

These three questions have, by implication, though not all categorically stated, been under the consideration of the Council at their last session; and they have all been, in effect, answered in the negative.

It is my intention to submit to you reasons for suspecting that it is not after all quite certain that they should not all three be answered in the affirmative. If this savours of presumption, pray at all events believe me that I have no want of respect for the eminent and important body whose decisions are nevertheless challenged, no lack of recognition of the thoughtful labour which they have expended upon the many-sided question of medical education.

The first question is as to the age at which a diploma should be obtainable. It is not an intricate one and need not detain us long. A year more means an increased strain upon the poorer aspirants; a year's delay in earning their bread, precluding some of them probably from entering the profession legally; tending to induce them to adopt courses which are undesirable and perhaps illegal. If only the students who are the least well furnished with money were always the least well furnished with brains, well and good. But we all know that it is quite as often the opposite. It is not needful to labour this argument. From the discussion of the Council I gather that there were not more than one or two who did not agree with all that could be said upon this head; but they felt themselves at the same time constrained by other and most weighty considerations to postpone the age to 22. The answer to these considerations, if any, lies in the other two questions and the answers to be given to them.

The second question is why should two years be devoted to the study of general science. This subject cannot be discussed so concisely. In the first place it is needful to give a short account of the present position of these subjects in the medical curriculum. In the preliminary examination, "elementary mechanics of solids and fluids, comprising the elements of statics, dynamics and hydrostatics," are compulsory. "Botany, zoology, elementary chemistry," are optional; and they share this position with ancient Greek, and any modern language and logic. As one only of these optional subjects is required, it follows, that a candidate has no need to trouble himself with any science study till after he has passed his preliminary examination. How does it fare with him after he has passed through this portal, and become a registered medical student? The chief qualifying body is now the Conjoint Board. This body requires that at his first examination he shall pass in "chemistry, including chemical physics and practical chemistry." Perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a part of chemical physics, for "light" is excluded, at least it does not appear in the synopsis. This

I suppose has to be thrown in by his teacher of physiology, when he comes to the eye. Acoustics have presumably to be thrown in when he comes to the ear, at all events they are not otherwise provided for.

It would be interesting to know what amount, degree, or kind of knowledge the student must possess to satisfy the examiners in these subjects. I cannot tell you. We have far too little information, indeed directly none, as to the standard reached by those who are successful in pass examinations. As regards, for example, the Conjoint Board, is it too much to ask that three or four of the lowest standard of written pass papers in each year should be printed verbatim and furnished to the constituents of the Board—the Fellows of the two Colleges who elect the Councils which appoint the Board? Further, it is reasonable, and for several reasons highly desirable, that the total number or the percentage of marks obtained by each successful candidate should be printed after his name in the pass list. Why should one who obtains 90 per cent. of the total obtainable be put on a dead level with another who obtains just the lowest number which will let him through? What more reliable and convincing testimonial could a man produce in after-life? Why, then, should he not possess it? Why should not his school have the credit of it? At Sandhurst and similar institutions the total numbers obtained by each man at both entrance and exit examinations are published in the daily papers after his name. If this practice is not derogatory to the officers of Her Majesty's Service, why should it be so to the members of our profession? Is it too much to hope that it will be done?

To return now to the first examination of the Conjoint Board. I am unable to give you any direct information as to the severity of it, being without direct knowledge; but I can tell you what some, who are likely, because it is their business and interest to know, think about it. The following paragraph is to be found in this summer's advertisement of an important metropolitan school:—

"N.B.—Special arrangements have been made to meet the requirements of the Examining Board in England, so as to enable students entering in May to pass Part I (Chemistry and Chemical Physics) and Part II (Materia Medica and Pharmacy) at the first examination in July."

You observe two things: First, that Part II (Materia Medica and Pharmacy), to which I have not previously referred, is included in this offer. Secondly, that it is addressed to students at large: not to those only who have special aptitude for such studies, nor to those only who have already made some progress in them. It stands, then, on record for all time that, in the opinion of competent persons, a present day student of ordinary ability may acquire within three months all the knowledge and education required of him by the chief licensing body in England, in respect to these vital studies. I do not blame the authorities of that school for making this offer. The object of their existence is to supply a demand; the demand for a certain amount of scientific instruction exists, the quantity is determined by others, not by themselves. They are quite within their rights in offering to supply this quantity. This, then, is how scientific instruction now stands. It is superfluous to spend time in showing that this position is not satisfactory—that early compulsory scientific instruction barely exists, that compulsory scientific education does not exist at all.

The General Medical Council at its last session determined that the position is not satisfactory, and has prescribed measures for its alteration; and though it has power only to recommend, I do not for a moment doubt that the Conjoint Board will adopt and act upon these recommendations.

They are as follows:—

That in every course of professional study and examinations the following subjects must be contained, namely:

I. Physics, including the elementary mechanics of solids and fluids, and the rudiments of heat, light and electricity.

II. Chemistry, including the principles of the science and the details which bear on the study of medicine.

III. Elementary biology.

It will be observed that elementary mechanics are removed from the preliminary period to that of professional study. The next resolution was to the effect that the examination in these should be passed before the commencement of the second winter session. It is thus in effect announced that a student shall only be required to devote a nominal year—that is, an actual nine months, to these important studies. Well may one member of the Council have said: "It was an imposition on the public to say that they taught their students physics, chemistry, and biology. It was at best a mere superficial veneering or varnish that could be obtained in twelve months." And to show to what straits the Council is reduced by the exiguity of the time placed at a student's disposal, the same member proposed, and it was carried, that elementary mechanics should be added to this list. The veneer will certainly not be thickened by so doing.

Now let us shortly examine the objects to be kept in view in ordaining the study of such subjects. These are, compendiously, to obtain such knowledge as will enable him to understand what his teacher means when he speaks, for example, of a limb acting as a lever of the first order; to obtain an intelligent acquaintance with the principles of instruments used or mentioned as, for example, a thermometer; to understand chemical references and to be able to perform certain chemical operations; to acquire certain knowledge which will enable him to learn more quickly the specialities of human anatomy and physiology. All these and such like results are useful and in many ways important. But there is, or ought to be, another object, more important to my mind than the whole of these put together.

One reason, perhaps, why instruction and education are so often used as if they were synonymous terms is that no hard and fast line can be drawn between them. There are, however substantial differences, which may be concisely stated thus: The utility of education lies in the process; the utility of instruction lies in the utility of the result, that is of the knowledge acquired. It is, I suppose, impossible to instruct a person without in some degree educating him, or to educate without in some degree instructing him. But this I regard as certain—that instruction becomes education in direct proportion to the time spent in conveying it. The system to follow must be line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. The twelvemonth now to be allotted to science may serve to cram in a fair share of instruction in facts and phenomena, but it will be impossible to do more. It will be impossible to really enable one to grasp the great principles which underlie these sciences. Even of the knowledge acquired, how much will cling? Scientific education—the acquisition of the faculty or habit of intuitively and invariably regarding any subject, any fact, any proposition in a strict, precise, and logical manner; scientific methods, scientific modes of thought and habits of mind, the scientific sense—where will all that be? Early compulsory scientific education is in the present non-existent. The new arrangements will give it, I fear, at the best, a very precarious existence. In two years a good deal might be done to remedy this.

Suppose that we threw overboard half these subjects, that would be styled "lowering the standard of education." There are some phrases more deadly than argument; but would this phrase be justly applicable to such a proceeding? I submit to you that what lowers the standard is imperfect and inaccurate learning; that in proportion as a student thoroughly understands what he professes to learn his standard is raised, and conversely. Adding fresh subjects to others unintelligently learned is the most fatal form of lowering the standard. In the special case before us possibly a compromise might be best—give him in a certain number of subjects that smattering which is euphemistically termed elementary knowledge. It is not pretended that it is not useful. Instruct him in these; but, on the other hand, educate him in some one or more of them. Let himself select which; but raise the standard of examination sufficiently to ensure that his knowledge is such as cannot have been obtained by cramming—that it is ingrained in his mind and can never be eradicated, whether he retains a memory of details or not. It is on these grounds and for these reasons that I ask for two years to be allotted to preliminary science. It is not too much. Why is it not allotted? It cannot be allotted unless compulsory preliminary education ceases earlier. This brings us to the third question—why should this not end at 15 years of age? That, and why it is not done, is what we have now got to see.

There is no reason to doubt that since the General Medical Council was called into existence the average of preliminary education has considerably improved. Nor ought we to grudge the Council the credit of having effectively assisted this process. At the same time it should not be forgotten that there has been a considerable improvement in education generally. And it is reasonable to suppose that this wave has had its influence upon the classes from which medical students come.

During its last session the Council made alterations in the subjects of the preliminary examination. These regulations are, as I have already pointed out, in the power of the Council to make, and it has made them, compulsory; they are to take effect from January 1st, 1892. It it is not needful to trouble you with the details. They do not affect the lines or the grounds of the ensuing argument. If you do not admit its validity under present circumstances neither would you do so under the future ones. If it is good now so would it be good then. Indeed, the alterations would make it more rather than less cogent.

When I undertook an inquiry into the preliminary examination of medical students it occurred to me that it would be interesting, and might be instructive, to investigate the educational status of classes other than those from which our students are drawn. By the kindness of the Chairman of the Birmingham School Board (Mr. George Dixon, M.P.), I was enabled to interview Mr. Horton, the head master of the Icknield Street school, an ordinary boys' school. From him I ascertained the following facts.

Education, I may premise, is just now in a state of fermentation. The Right Honourable the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education have, like our own Council, been making changes. These will not come into operation till August. My first visit to the school took place in April; but the new Code makes no alterations which affect my argument so far as I have been able to ascertain by reading it. At all events, anyone who takes an interest in this subject can procure it from any bookseller for 4½d., and the previous (1889) code for 6d.; and very interesting reading they are to one who sees them for the first time. I learnt from Mr. Horton that boys only remained with him till they had passed out of the sixth standard. Besides what are termed "elementary" or "class subjects," (I wish I dared trespass on your time to give these in a little detail); there is also a list of eleven "specific" subjects, two only of which may be taught. The selection of these two is left to the managers. Our school board (the managers) have selected "mechanics" and "chemistry." These "specific subjects" are taught only to boys in the sixth standard; and of these only to those boys whose intelligence is judged by the master to be such that this teaching will not interfere with their acquisition of the compulsory subjects. There are in the sixth standard about 50 per cent. of such selected boys at Icknield Street school.

I placed before Mr. Horton the schedule of subjects at the present time required for the preliminary examination, and asked him to point out what portions these boys could pass at the end of their year. He replied as follows:—

1. "English language, including grammar and composition." In this they could pass well.

2. "Latin." In this they could not pass as it is not taught.

3. "Elements of mathematics, comprising arithmetic, including vulgar and decimal fractions." In these they could pass well, but in the rest of No. 3 "(*b*) algebra, including simple equations; (*c*) geometry, including the first book of *Euclid*, with easy questions on the subject matter of the same," they could not pass as they are not taught.

4. "Elementary mechanics of solids and fluids, comprising the elements of statics, dynamics, and hydrostatics."

5. "Optional subjects (*a*) elementary chemistry." In the latter as well as in No. 4 they could pass. This I state on the authority of Mr. Harrison, science teacher to the School Board, and author of some admirable and cheap handbooks on the subjects comprised in No. 4. Analysing this statement, we find an easy pass in English set off by an absolute non-pass in Latin, half a pass in mathematics, a full pass in Nos. 4 and 5. We see that even if we made a large allowance for severity in the medical student's case as regards 4 and 5, and reckoned mathematics as less than half a pass, we might fairly say that the Board School boy could pass half the preliminary examination, and it must be remembered that he could pass in several other things as well, such as history, geography, etc., but these are not demanded from medical students.

My next inquiry was, "Of what ages are these boys?" We went into the class room to see. There were 27 present. Of these

5	had turned	13
14	„	12
7	„	11
1	„	10
Total.....		27

Suppose that as my visit was in April, and the examinations would not take place till August, we reckon those boys as having completed the age of their next birthday, we should then have

5	boys of	14
14	„	13
7	„	12
1	boy of	11

giving an average age of 13.3 years. Taking, then, the age of entry into the profession as 17, these boys would have nearly four years in which to acquire the balance of knowledge required for entrance. If we allot two years for this, except Latin, we have other two years to devote to "Latin, including grammar, translation from specified authors, and translation of easy passages not taken from such authors." When we consider that a boy has previously been educated for several years, that he has reached the quasi-mature age of 15, that he has two years to devote to the subject, surely these two years are sufficient for the acquisition of that much Latin. It is true that the new regulations affect the details of this argument, but only the details—not the effect. Some of these subjects are withdrawn, for example, mechanics and chemistry; some are added, for example, Euclid Books II and III. But although the Birmingham School Board does not select, the Committee of Council permit the study of Euclid and French, so that a boy would have, if these were selected, still two years for the Second and Third Books of Euclid and for French, and other two years for Latin. The acquirement of Latin would therefore absorb two of the best years of his life. It is, of course, an obvious comment that these boys are never likely to seek admission into the profession. But, in the first place, I would remark that it is, I conceive, desirable that we should draw into our ranks the best talent wherever it comes from. I should be glad to see pecuniary obstacles to such a result, if possible, removed. To this end fees for instruction, registration, and examination might well be waived in a limited number of cases of conspicuous ability. This, however, is merely a "pious opinion," and not an argument. In quoting these cases my object was to bring more vividly before you the extent to which Latin interferes with other branches of learning—that it takes at least a good two years, and, indeed, probably absorbs even more in upper class education. It becomes then a reasonable subject of inquiry, why is such knowledge demanded of the student, and in what way will he be benefited by the acquisition? We can conceive two modes in which benefit might accrue. He might be able to put to good use the knowledge he has acquired: that would be an instructional benefit. Or he might have profited by the process of acquiring it; that would be an educational benefit.

Let us see then what the uses are to which a medical man does actually put his knowledge of Latin.

1. He writes in his prescriptions the Latin names of drugs instead of their English or Anglicised ones.

2. He writes in Latin his instructions to the dispenser for compounding the drugs so ordered.

3. He writes in Latin his instructions to the patient as to the quantities in, and the times at which medicines are to be taken, or as to the manner applications are to be used. These are the only uses to which he puts his costly knowledge. It must also be allowed that he can, if he is so disposed, read easy passages from *Celsus*.

Now, I submit to you that the necessity for doing the three former things is of a purely arbitrary and artificial character. And, further, that the necessity, such as it is, has already crumbled, and continues to crumble. I will give reasons for this allegation. As to writing the names of drugs in Latin: In accordance with the Medical Act of Parliament, the General Medical Council publishes a *Pharmacopœia*—our sole legal authority for the drugs we use. In this *Pharmacopœia* the Latin names are given, it is true, but all the English names are also given. As to writing in Latin our instructions to the dispenser: All directions to the compounder are, in the *British Pharmacopœia*, written in English, of which no Latin version is given. The Conjoint Board goes even further. If you refer to the "Synopsis indicating the Range of Subjects in the Examination on Materia Medica and Pharmacy" published by this body, you will find all the drugs specified are called by their English names only; no Latin synonyms at all. For example, we find "silver nitrate" not "argenti nitras;" "Acids—hydrochloric, nitric"—etc., not "acidum hydrochloricum," etc., and so on through the whole list of nearly two pages. The General Medical Council at their late session received from the Royal College of Physicians a list of proposed additions to the

Pharmacopœia. That list was, I believe, in English only. So far, then, as the example of these representative bodies goes, it lends little countenance to the still customary habit of writing the two first portions of a prescription in Latin. And it seems to me that we should be equally in order if we used those English names with which the Council has authoritatively provided us. Lastly, as regards the instructions to patients how to take their medicines and use their appliances: It is common knowledge that a large and increasing number of practitioners invariably write these in English. And it is equally certain that those who do so are as often to be found in the higher grades of the profession as in any other. I am in no way concerned to defend this innovation, having personally always followed the ancient practice. The hypothetical student of the easy bits of *Celsus* I will pass by on the other side. If you desire to state your belief in his non-existence, your literary memory will supply you with a suitable form of expression. That, from an instructional point of view, the compulsory study of Latin rests upon an artificial basis I claim to have proved.

There remains the vital question of its educational value. At a remote period all knowledge beyond the most elementary was communicated, and communicable solely, in a dead language, and chiefly in Latin. A deeply rooted feeling, which probably originated in that period, still exists. It is that a nonclassical education is so imperfect as to be unworthy of a gentleman. Or, to use a word which has become obsolete in polite society without leaving a successor, such an education is not "genteel." That has but little to do with its intrinsic merits, but it lends to the maintenance of the custom the support of a stupendous inertia. There are, it must be admitted, large numbers of persons who are keenly alive to the salutary and expansive effects produced upon their own minds by the classical element in their own education. These naturally believe that such effects could have been produced by no other means. Now, it is no part of my purpose to disparage classical education. I do not despise, and I desire not to undervalue, any branch of human knowledge. We can examine no one of them without perceiving that unwearied industry, exceeding ingenuity, and many high intellectual qualities have been engaged in bringing them to their present state of perfection. All this is at least as true of classical as of any other branch of learning. Nor do I deny that such studies open up paths of literature of the highest interest, and in some respects all their own. I will grant all that may be claimed for them short of this—that there is no other course of education which can equally cultivate, strengthen, and expand all the faculties of the brain or qualities of the intellect. Whatever may be the apparent superiority of any means of education, they must be submitted to certain tests before their actual value can be decided. We have to inquire, not merely into their real value, but into their relative value. The latter is subject to the determination of two points. Is there any other system of which the educational value is equal, and of which the instructional value is superior? How far is it suitable for the class of minds upon which it is intended to impose it?

The first question has already been dealt with so far as it concerns our present purpose. The second question I shall not answer myself. I prefer to place before you the words of one whom no one will accuse of indifference to classical acquirements. They are these: "In my opinion, classical education is in itself the very best of all for all those who have a certain tendency towards it, and those whose circumstances are such as will enable them not to be content with the merest rudiments, but who will proceed to the point at which they will realise some solid attainments. Terrible errors have undoubtedly been committed in the past—and in the past I include the days of my own experience—in endeavouring to thrust the classics down the throats of everybody of a certain rank, quite irrespective of capacity and circumstance. I always bear this in mind.....that the main purpose of education is to make the human mind a supple, effective, strong, available instrument for whatever purposes it may be required to be applied to." Such is the evidence formally given before an Education Committee of the Flintshire County Council by Mr. Gladstone. On this, I propose three questions: Does the Latinity exacted from every medical student answer best to the description of "merest rudiments" or of "solid attainments?" Are—as regards medical students—"the terrible errors of the past" errors of the past only? Can the mind of a medical student be made as supple, effective, strong, and available an instrument for his purposes—so far as Nature has endowed him with faculties—by no education unless it includes Latin? I desire in future to give to the poorer student the greatest possible share of those advantages which are now enjoyed by the rich. Latin certainly stands in the way. He cannot have all. Which is the more important? Latin, or some other element of the rich man's more extended education? Should not then Latin be placed in the list of optional subjects? is one question which I should like to see discussed by the General Medical Council. But, indeed, this is not the only one. When the Council originally undertook to consider the subject of preliminary education, they would seem, judging by results, to have proposed to themselves this question: How best to secure that candidates shall have had that which commonly passes under the denomination of a public school education? For this I do not blame them. To have done otherwise would have put them into disaccord with public opinion. This no prudent body would do. However little it may owe its position to public suffrages, public opinion is the base of its operations. In thirty-two years great educational changes have come to pass in this country. I desire to see the whole question of preliminary education reopened, reinvestigated, reargued; and I will briefly state how, as it seems to me, the subject might be best dealt with.

Let there be a Select Committee of the Council, sitting with open doors. Let it take the evidence of two or three persons carefully selected from each of the following classes: public school masters, Her Majesty's inspectors of schools, head masters of training colleges, head masters of Board Schools. Let the primary subject of investigation be thus stated: In what way can it be best ascertained that a boy, aged 15, is of not less than average intellectual capacity? that he has for ten years been so trained as to have had his intellect generally developed? The question is not what he has learned, but how he has learned it; not how much knowledge he has acquired, but whether he understands what he has acquired; not what he has thought about, but whether he has been trained to think at all.

Inquiry as to what subjects will best serve such training, and which are the most useful in after years would, of course, follow; but if his then intellectual status is satisfactory, the boy is fit for differentiation into a science student. As to this part of his education, an analogous inquiry with the assistance of experts in science teaching should be undertaken. It is not superfluous to observe that there are at the present moment eighty-nine independent examinations, scattered all over the world, any one of which is accepted as qualifying for registration as a medical student. It is difficult to see how, under such circumstances, the Council can exercise a proper control over preliminary education; but it must in fairness be admitted that this is a matter of great difficulty, and with more than one side.

I have to-night stated to you facts which I believe to be accurate, and arguments which I have striven to make fair. I have thus arrived at conclusions which I believe to be reasonable; these also are before you. I do not ask you to accept them; I only ask you to reconsider them at your leisure, and to form your own opinion of their validity. But you may say, What use in so spending time? Is there any probability that, however we may desire them, any of these things will be done? My answer is this: the General Medical Council consists of a number of men, many of whom are highly distinguished, and there is no one of them to whom I would refuse the credit of being earnest, thoughtful, and conscientious. I believe them all to be sincerely desirous to regulate their actions in accordance with public medical opinion. It is for you, if you are interested in these matters, to make that opinion. If you do so, I have complete confidence that what you desire will be done in substance; the precise form is a matter of no importance.

Should you thus secure such an investigation into the preliminary and scientific education of medical students, the results might, I feel assured they would, benefit other classes besides our own. They would tend to avert a danger which now threatens schools of all grades. This danger is that instruction may crowd out education; for indeed it is possible—*propter scientiam sciendi perdere causas.*

Mr. F. S. Eve has resigned the appointment of Pathological Curator to the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, which he has held since 1881, when the appointment was first made. No fewer than 1,300 additions have been made to the collection when under his charge, in no small degree through his own exertions. To him also visitors and students are mainly indebted for the issue of annual supplements to the *Catalogue of Pathological Specimens.*